

# Walk By The Spirit

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[0:00] I have sort of a David Letterman top 10 list to start out. It's not quite 10 and it's not quite David Letterman because I'm not nearly as funny as him.

But seven things that you won't hear in church. Number one, now that keeping all of God's commandments has become second nature, I'm planning to solve some real problems. Number two, I've stopped praying because I realized I don't need any help. Number three, I don't read the Bible anymore because I already know everything there is to know about God. Number four, since I've earned God's love for myself, I'm now working on helping others earn it too. Number five, my strength is sufficient for my salvation. Number six, grace is only for losers. Number seven, wisdom? That's why I've got this handy magic eight ball.

[1:09] It's a toy from my childhood for those who don't know. I say magic eight ball, should I go do this? And it says it is decidedly so and so on and so forth.

So that's a list of things you won't hear in church. It's right to kind of chuckle and laugh because they sound so ridiculous. And yet, our sin problem goes so deep, our fleshly nature so pervades and oozes into every nook and cranny of our lives, that things that sound ridiculous on one hand actually show up in our lives.

Not certainly in these brazen kind of arrogant statements that I listed, but more subtly. We operate in our own strength all the time.

In fact, that was part of Billy's prayer of confession that we heard. We fail to carve out time for the Lord to seek His face and to have Him help us.

Sometimes we act in haste in a situation that requires a lot of wisdom and waiting. On God. Sometimes we forget just how much help we need to combat our sin-sick condition.

[2:35] Sometimes life is so busy we don't open our Bibles because we don't have time, failing to remember that life is in knowing God.

The bottom line is we need help. This is where the book of Galatians comes in handy. To kind of get us back into this book, we've taken three or four weeks off now to enjoy Advent together, but so to get us back into the book of Galatians, this is a letter written by the Apostle Paul to a mostly non-Jewish Christian church in Galatia.

That's being written to folks who wouldn't necessarily have been following the commandments of God because they were Gentile, they were pagans, and they would have been living very different lives than the typical Jewish religious man or woman.

And Paul writes because these Galatian Christians are in danger of abandoning their faith in Jesus for a cursed captivity under the Jewish law.

See, a group of false teachers, we call them Judaizers, they've come in to this church and they've started giving the Galatians this message that says, your faith is incomplete until you begin keeping the Jewish commandments.

[4:06] All this faith in Jesus, it will be next to nothing until you obey the Old Testament law.

And tragically, this church who's been set free by Jesus, the moment that they believe that His perfect life, His death for sinners and His glorious resurrection and now current ascension and rule and reign over all things, this church has believed this.

They believe the good news. They're in danger of turning from it. Surrendering the freedom that Jesus alone provides in exchange for slavery. They're surrendering their salvation for

condemnation.

And Paul is urgently warning them. He's calling them back to faith alone in Jesus. Saying the law cannot save you.

Only Jesus can through faith in Him alone. But if the law is not the guide into righteousness, if the law is not ushering the people of God into salvation, then who or what is?

[5:19] Well, Paul's answer in our text is, the Holy Spirit is the guide into righteousness and the one who is ushering us into salvation. It's the Holy Spirit alone who does this.

So, in Galatians 5, 16-24, our text for this morning, God, through the Apostle Paul, issues a command to Christians, both the Galatian church and us today, and then gives us the reason why. So, a command and a reason, and essentially, if I could summarize it and boil it down to one sentence, it's this. Walk by the Spirit because you need Him.

Walk by the Spirit because you need Him. We all need help, right? We're in agreement there. And Jesus has sent, not just sort of some book, of course the Bible is amazing, not just a list of do's and don'ts, but a helper, a person, to help us, the Holy Spirit.

So, walk by the Spirit because you need His help. We're going to walk through this passage this morning by looking at three reasons why we must walk by the Spirit.

[6:43] Three reasons why we must walk by the Spirit. Reason number one, you need Him to defeat the flesh. You need the Spirit to defeat the flesh.

This is what Paul gets at in verses 16 and 17. Right on the heels of making this command, walk by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

Paul says in these verses that each and every Christian is engaged in a conflict. Now, he's not talking about that kind of cosmic conflict of God versus Satan and all the corresponding angels and demons.

Not that conflict Paul has in mind here, but an inner conflict, a conflict inside each and every Christian. It begins the moment we trust in Jesus for salvation and it continues for our entire life until either we die or Jesus graciously returns.

And it's because that at our salvation, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in us. The moment that happens, this conflict begins waging inside of us.

[7:59] But that also means that this conflict is not one that is just universally true of all human beings. This isn't like the cartoon where there's a devil on one shoulder and an angel on the other shoulder and every person is just kind of struggling through this.

There is a sense that that's true, but that's not what Paul's getting at. This is a conflict between the sinful nature of the Christian and the Holy Spirit who now indwells the Christian.

Just so we're clear, the Holy Spirit is a person. He's the third person of God.

The third person of what we call the Trinity. God is three persons in one. There's not three gods, there's one God, and yet there are three distinct persons and the Holy Spirit is one of those persons.

He is God and He lives in every single Christian the moment we are born again, the moment we trust in Jesus Christ for forgiveness and eternal life.

[9:07] In fact, the Holy Spirit is the only reason anyone in this room is a Christian in the first place. The Spirit gives life. The flesh is no help at all, Jesus says in John 6.

So Paul explains this conflict in verse 17. Listen to what he says. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh.

For these are opposed to each other to keep you from doing the things you want to do. Do you notice the word against that Paul uses twice? When you see that word against, you should think hostile, enemy.

The flesh and the Holy Spirit are enemies. If you think back to a science class that you had in school, probably in grade school or middle school, and your science teacher says, today class, we're going to look at magnets.

Right? And a real magnet has kind of this north pole on it and a south pole on it, and it attracts the opposite pole of another magnet. Right? So if you take the north side of a magnet and the south

side, they actually pull together.

[10:26] Paul is saying the opposite is true of the flesh and Spirit. You put the north end of a magnet against the north end of a magnet and they repel each other. They're headed in opposite directions.

The flesh and the Spirit possess contrary affections and they're motivated and driven by opposing desires. That's the conflict Paul's talking about, but the good news is that it's not a fair fight.

These are not equal opposites. So of course, we know as a Christian that the flesh and the temptations and the desires of things that are not of God can feel very strong.

There can be a very strong pull toward these things. It can seem irresistible at points. But look at verse 16. Paul's not rejecting that experience, but he's saying something so full of hope in this verse.

But I say, walk by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. Paul's saying here that the possibility of gratifying the flesh in the moment, in the situation that you're walking by the Spirit is zero percent.

[11:53] Our English translation sounds a bit tame compared to what Paul's really trying to get at. He says, there is zero possibility, no potential whatsoever in gratifying the flesh and its desires if you are in that moment walking by the Spirit.

Now just a caveat, Paul here is not saying that somehow we can ascend beyond the point where the flesh causes trouble in our lives.

He's not saying that you should be perfect all day, every day, end of story. He's not saying that. We will have this lifelong conflict. But, he's saying there is hope.

There is reason to have full confidence that when we are walking by the Spirit we will not be gratifying the desires of the flesh. It should make our ears perk up, friends.

It should be filling our hope tanks of our hearts to hear that because we know all too well this inner conflict. facing this relentless day by day temptation and influence of the flesh.

[13:05] The discouragement and the heartache when we fail. Yet there's hope. The Holy Spirit, Paul says, is so much more powerful, so much more influential that it's not a fair fight.

Whenever he leads, whenever we walk in his strength, we will never ever gratify the desires of the flesh. It is impossible because these desires are opposed to each other.

They're not moving in the same direction, they're not on parallel tracks, they're opposed. If you're going this way, you can't be going that way. We all need this reminder today and every day, don't we?

Maybe you're here and you're discouraged by a sin that just keeps cropping up in your life and it just seems like you can't get a handle on it, you can't gain victory. Paul would say, walk by the Spirit.

Not in some kind of just dismissal sort of way, but look to Him. He's your hope. You will conquer the flesh by the Spirit. You need His help.

[14:08] You won't do it any other way. So don't look to yourself. Don't be gloomy. But walk by the Spirit. Maybe you're in a hard and stressful season.

Just temptation feels more intense and more real just because you're strung out. You're tired and you're not thinking as clearly as you normally are. You need the Spirit. You need His help.

But even if we're in a good spot in the room, right? Everything spiritually is going pretty well. We're not struggling with anything in particular. Still striving and yearning for holiness.

Holy Spirit is who you need. We don't look an ounce more like Jesus by our own effort. It's by the Holy Spirit working in us. So that's reason number one.

We're in a conflict and we need the Spirit to defeat the flesh. So walk by Him. The second reason Paul points to is in verses 18 to 23.

[15:16] He says, you need the Spirit because He produces and provides what the flesh cannot. You need the Spirit because He alone can produce things that the flesh has no hope of producing.

And bear with me because this is the bulkiest part of the text. It's the bulkiest part of the sermon as well. The first thing we see in verse 18 is the Spirit produces and provides freedom.

Listen to 18. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Okay, I don't hear freedom. I don't hear anything about the flesh or what's going on here.

When Paul says under the law, which he has three, four, five times previously in Galatians, he's speaking of being in captivity under the law, being in slavery under the law.

If you want to turn to chapter 3, verse 23, I think it's most clear there what Paul's meaning by this phrase. Now, before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed.

[16:41] Okay, so under the law means captivity, but what does this have to do with the flesh? Paul's been saying through chapters 3 and 4 of Galatians is that those who are captive under the law are attempting in their own strength, aka according to the flesh, to achieve righteousness and salvation.

They're trying to keep the law to earn righteousness, to earn salvation. And Paul's been warning the Galatians, you can't do so. By works of the law, no one will be justified.

No one will be saved. Because the law reveals sin and the law imprisons us. So for the Jew who was trying to gain his salvation through law keeping, Paul says, you're a slave.

You're not free and you're not righteous. You're a slave. In fact, Paul says, the law was never intended to save anyone. But our own flesh, our own pride, tries to save ourself anyway.

The flesh enslaves religious people underneath the law that God gave for that very purpose. The Spirit alone frees them to live for Jesus.

[18:08] Verse 19 continues this argument about freedom. Paul writes that he's talking about the flesh enslaving but the Spirit providing freedom.

And Paul's been given kind of two ways that you can be enslaved. The first is the one I've just been talking about being under the law, being captive under the law. And now in 19 he pivots and says, here's the second way you can be a slave.

By living fully into the desires and passions of the flesh. You can be imprisoned by attempting to save yourself through rule keeping and you can be imprisoned by pursuing the immoral unrighteous works of the flesh.

The Galatian church would be very familiar with this list in 19 to 21. This essentially was their former life. But they were in danger of reverting back to slavery though God had set them free not by becoming immoral unrighteous people again but by thinking that they could start keeping a law to save themselves.

Both are slavery. That's why Paul can pivot so quickly from in verse 18 talking about the law to verse 19 talking about the works of the flesh. In his mind they're both under this category of slavery and captivity.

[19:33] Because he spent two chapters already talking about the law and its ability to enslave. He only needs to raise it in one sentence to draw all of that information back in.

Essentially he says both the rule follower and the immoral are slaves. The spirit alone provides freedom. fruit. But additionally the spirit also provides Christ-like fruit.

It's the point of the comparison in verses 19 to 21 with the fruit of the spirit in 22 and 23. Paul saying look what the flesh produces and provides.

Only unrighteous things. Whether you're trying to keep the rule of God or whether you're just letting it loose and living for the flesh. The flesh produces unrighteous things.

It's only the spirit who produces righteous fruit. Flesh cannot provide righteousness.

[20:46] It can't help you and me become more like Jesus Christ. It only works immorality. Now look a little bit more closely at this works of the flesh in 19 to 21.

Paul's intentionally organized this for us. The first three works that he lists in verse 19 they cover the full range of sexual sin.

Whether it's immorality, adultery, homosexuality, lust, all of it. He covers them all in these three words. He says those are of the flesh. The next two on the list, idolatry and sorcery, deal with false religion.

Worshipping a god other than the one true god. Or trying to manipulate this deity to do what you want him to. And the final two in the list, drunkenness and orgies, deal with this blatant lack of

self-control.

This kind of just letting loose. And rather than seeing that last word as some kind of sexual connotation, it's more of like the movie Animal House, just like some big frat party and carousing. [22:07] It's kind of what you want to think of there. These are all works of the flesh. We skipped over the middle eight because Paul wants to draw attention here. He wants to focus in on the middle eight.

And it starts the third word of verse 20. Just listen to these and notice the relational kind of components of these. These are sins that have to do with treatment of other people.

Enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy. It seems like Paul probably has the Judaizers in his mind as he's writing several of these.

Strife, rivalries, division, envy. These people are coming into the church and wreaking havoc, dividing people over by speaking heresy and falsehood. People who are envious of Paul's position and authority and trying to get him in trouble and trying to oust him from having sway over this church.

church. But not just that, this list kind of hits even closer to home for the Galatians. If you look at 5 verse 15, Paul's talking to the Galatians in this passage we heard three or four weeks ago and saying if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you're not consumed by one another.

[23:38] So the Galatians are kind of at each other's necks a little bit. And then in verse 26, the last verse of chapter 5, we see a similar idea again.

Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another. These are real warnings because the Galatian church seems to be kind of taking on and developing some of these very divisive and hurtful and sinful fleshly practices that they're seeing exhibited in these false teachers.

chapters. It's a pretty sobering list, isn't it? We should see ourselves in various ways and shapes and forms in various works on this list.

Sobering list when we stop and think a little bit about it. And Paul doesn't even give a full list. He says, these are the all inclusive works of the flesh.

Things like these. So we could go on and list more and more and more things. It's a sobering list because of the number of fleshly works that involve our treatment of one another.

[24:54] Rivalry and division and jealousy and envy and things like this. That doesn't mean that we must kind of stay quiet and just kind of keep the peace sort of as some fake facade of being united but it does mean that if we engage in heavy things and things we're passionate about that the words we choose, our tone of voice and the heartbeat underneath of those things matters a lot.

I find it so sobering to recognize that if I am living a life that has fits of anger as just kind of the normal course of my existence that Paul says people that do this stuff don't inherit the kingdom. But Paul has not sort of listed this thing to sort of condemn anybody but to call the Galatians and to call us out of these things. We need help.

Paul says the Spirit will provide the Christ-like fruit that you need. Only He can make us righteous like Jesus.

We need Him and when we walk by Him, when we walk by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, this fruit that we see in verses 22 and 23 is evident moment by moment, circumstance by circumstance, but also increasingly so as we mature and grow in our faith.

[26:35] This fruit should be blossoming and expanding in our lives as we walk by the Spirit and seek His help. Notice again that the fruit of the Spirit involves so much of this relational kind of dynamic.

Love, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, things that show up in our interactions with one another. And Paul here is not talking about things that are natural temperament.

Some of us are just very by nature kind people. Some of us are fairly patient individuals, it's our natural disposition. That's not what Paul is talking about.

He's not saying, well, you get a pass if you're an impatient guy. You get a pass on this fruit. Saying this is fruit that is of the Spirit. Only God produces it and He will produce it as we seek His help and walk by the Spirit.

God will love and serve others even if they may annoy us or disappoint us or hurt us.

[27:59] It means that God will produce the fruit of gentleness inside of us who may be struggling to love someone who's rude or harsh toward us.

And it means that we will be kind toward those who are impatient and aren't bearing the fruit of the Spirit. And we know all too well that we can end up on both sides of this exchange, right?

Sometimes we bear the fruit of the Spirit for the sake of those who are struggling with something.

And other times those of us in the church around us, our friends, our brothers and sisters bear the fruit for us because we need it, because we're struggling, because we've wronged somebody.

All of this is provided by the Spirit and only by the Spirit. And of course it's love that headlines the list.

This first priority on the list is love, because Paul has just said in the previous verses that the whole law is fulfilled in one word. You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

[29:14] That's verse 14. Paul says love is only possible, true love, the love he's talking about is only possible and yet readily available as we walk by the Spirit.

We need the Spirit to love one another. We need the Spirit to produce Christ like fruit in our lives. Flesh doesn't create these things. Only conflict and division and harm.

The Spirit empowers us to love, to joy, to peace, patience and kindness, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, self-control.

And ultimately, the thing that the Spirit provides is eternal life. The flesh isn't going to get you there. Paul says this much at the end of verse 21.

Those who practice such things, works of the flesh, will not inherit the kingdom of God. though we don't see the opposite idea at the end of the fruit of the Spirit, it's implied.

[30:28] Those who are bearing the fruit of the Spirit, those who are walking by the Spirit, are sons of God and they will inherit eternal life. life. It's been said that Jesus accomplishes our salvation and the Holy Spirit applies our salvation.

He gives us life in Jesus, he sustains our lives in Jesus, he ultimately will bring us to glory. So we need the Spirit.

He provides what the flesh cannot provide. Freedom, Christ-like fruit, eternal life. It's the second reason Paul gives walk by the Spirit.

The third and final reason of our text is in verse 24. We need the Spirit because he reminds us of who we are in Christ.

Paul writes in verse 24, and those who belong to Christ, Jesus, have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. This is a huge, bodacious claim.

[31:47] For those who belong to Christ, they have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. sinners. It means that the Christian already has the assurance of victory over the flesh because it's already on the cross being crucified and done away with.

Friends, let me let you in on a little secret. Crucifixion always works. It always kills the one it intends to kill.

Paul says, those who belong to Jesus have crucified the flesh. It's perishing, it's dying, it's being done away with. So in this verse, we have another message of hope.

It really is true. The flesh is perishing because of who we are. We need the Spirit because He reminds us of who we are in Christ.

Let me help realize that seems like I just went off on a tangent. But if we think about it for a second, we all know the difference, right, between a head knowledge and a heart knowledge.

[33:13] This is the longest two feet. to travel ever from our head to our heart. How do we get what's true about Jesus and what's true about us in Him from our head into our heart?

The flesh is not going to do it for us, friends. We can't think hard enough to get it from our head into our heart. It's the Spirit alone who will remind us and impress these things upon our heart in such a way that they begin to operate out of us.

We need the Spirit to remind us of who we are in Christ. Paul says this much, that's the Spirit's role back in chapter 4, verse 6.

He says this, And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. This is how what's true about us gets from our head to our heart. The Spirit reminds us. He lives and dwells in our hearts and He reminds us of what is true about us. Words, either spoken or on a page, can get into our heads.

[34:28] They can't get into our hearts. We need help for that. We need the Spirit for that. He alone affects the heart. We need Him to remember who we are, not in some mental or intellectual way, but in a way that transforms us and changes who we are.

Because we know we can all be forgetful that we even belong to Jesus in the first place. There's other times we can be hardened and callous and just don't want anything to do with the truth. We need the Spirit to soften us enough for it to get lodged in our heart and start producing fruit. Sometimes we can get tunnel vision thinking that the flesh is winning and we get so discouraged that we just check out.

The Spirit of Jesus is our helper. He's who we need. The beautiful thing Jesus says in John 16, 13, that when the Spirit comes, He will guide us into all truth.

He will reveal everything we need to know about God, about our salvation, about our very lives. The Spirit will bring us into that truth. Jesus doesn't say, this book that I'm leaving you or the self-help book or your own intuition, but the Holy Spirit, God Himself, will remind us of what we need to remember in order to live into this salvation accomplished by Jesus for us.

[36:01] So we tried to argue this morning from Galatians 5 that we need the Holy Spirit's help. We need Him to defeat the flesh. We need Him to produce and provide what only He can provide that the flesh cannot.

And we need the Spirit to remind us of who we are in Christ. Christ. So walk by the Spirit, friends. Hopefully this text has convinced you of your need to do so this morning, but I'm guessing maybe you're still wondering, well, how do I do that?

What does it mean to walk by the Spirit? It seems great. Yeah, sign me up, but how's this look? What does it mean? Well, with the time we have left, I want to try and help us answer that a little bit. First, I think there's confusion about who the Holy Spirit is, what He intends to do, and why He intends to do it. So let me give us a few things. A couple of, it's not this, it's not this.

Sometimes it might be that. It's always this. It's not this. Your alarm goes off in the morning, kind of wipe the sleep dust out of your eyes, and you wait for the Spirit to tell you whether you should drink coffee or tea.

[37:23] It's not that. The Spirit is interested in truth and righteousness, not beverage selections. It's not this either. The Spirit told me to punch that guy in the face.

Because I was mad at him. Or the Spirit told me to divorce my wife and marry this other lady. The Spirit never contradicts the Bible.

He always upholds it. Sometimes, there's a particular prompting. It's kind of hard to explain it.

It doesn't sort of show up as an objective thing in the Bible, but there's a prompting to, hey, get on the other side of the sidewalk. Or, man, I think I need to change lanes here or something.

Sometimes, this happens, right? We've probably experienced some of this. We shouldn't go looking for these things as if the Holy Spirit is just wanting to make us robots and just kind of dictate every single decision and move of our lives like that.

[38:27] It's not primarily what he cares to do in us and through us. We shouldn't rely on this type of thing. Some people might debate that, but that's kind of my take anyway.

But always, we can be sure that the Holy Spirit is seeking to produce and work this way in all of us. He's looking to glorify Jesus.

John 16, 14. He's looking to meet every single spiritual need we have. He's looking to produce righteousness in our attitudes, our affections, and our actions.

He's looking to assist our prayers. Abba, Father. And groanings with too deep for words when we don't know what to pray for as we ought. Romans 8.

He's always interested in enabling us to worship the risen Jesus. Always. Every time we gather, the Holy Spirit is interested in our worship and empowering us to worship God in the way that he's due.

[39:31] He's always guiding us into all truth. He always wants us to come to a greater and greater understanding of the word of God and what it means for our lives and who God is revealed to be in it.

He's always giving us understanding of God and of his word. These are things the Holy Spirit always delights to do. Always delights to convict us of sin and to transform us into the righteousness and image of Jesus.

He's passionate about these things and he works these things constantly in our lives on behalf of Christ. So now, just a couple little descriptions of what it can look like.

How do I walk by the Spirit? What are you getting at, Paul, when you say walk by the Spirit? I'll try to just sort of break that down and deconstruct it a little bit.

And this isn't perfect, but I hope it helps. We need to be aware of the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives. He's always with us.

[40:43] He lives in our hearts. He doesn't kind of go on vacation. He's always present in the heart of the Christian. We need to just cultivate this awareness that he is with us.

So many times, right, we can just walk around unaware of his presence. That does us no good if the command is to walk by him. We've got to be aware of him. And the more we're able to remember him, the more we can walk by him.

Walk in his power. Walk by his strength. Walk on the path that he is revealing to us from the Word of God for our ultimate good. It's kind of like this.

We have a two-story house. And even if my wife is upstairs and I'm downstairs, I know she's there. I know she's home. I know she's present simply because I know where she is.

It's kind of like that. If we can kind of develop that sort of awareness of the Holy Spirit, he's always home. He's always in us. He's always acting in our lives. To develop an awareness of his presence.

[42:05] But two, cultivate a dependence upon him. Particularly for everything spiritual. You can't understand a Bible verse?

Pray to the Holy Spirit to illuminate, to teach you what it means. And you might want to go ask help from a friend who studied it longer or whatever.

But the Holy Spirit wants us to know God's Word. Wants us to know the truth. Depend upon him. He should be your first call. You need wisdom for a major decision in your life. James 1.5 If anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask God.

Spirit, you're with me. I need wisdom. I need help. I don't know what I'm doing. Desiring to love your spouse, your neighbor, your brother, sister better.

It's the Spirit's fruit. Ask him. Depend on him to bear that fruit in your life. He will. I was thinking this week, I was convicted by this, that though I would say I don't want to rely on the Spirit to kind of decide which grocery store I frequent, how easily I can turn to sad sources for information when the Spirit should be the one I turn to.

[43:40] I don't do this particular one but it's like turning to Google to seek some spiritual answer instead of going to the Spirit of the living God dwelling inside of us.

It's silly and yet I do this stuff all the time. I don't rely and depend on the one who lives in me and wants my good. Wants me to know God. Wants me to be wise in my actions.

Wants me to put the flesh to death. Must depend on the Spirit. That's walking by Him. Walking by the Spirit means growing in godliness.

1 Thessalonians chapter 4 says the will of God is your sanctification. The will of God is that you would come to resemble more and more the person of Jesus Christ.

Your character, your attitudes, your actions would be like Jesus. I want Paul's question in Galatians 3 verse 3 ringing in my mind a lot for this reason.

[44:53] He writes to the Galatians, are you so foolish that having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? Are you trying to work this out on your own?

If we want to grow in godliness, we need the Holy Spirit. And growing in godliness is walking by the Spirit.

I cannot grow, I will not grow apart from the Spirit's help. He gives the growth. So the last thing.

All of these, I've been trying to both help us see that the Spirit has this active, ongoing presence in our life, but that we're also cooperating along with Him.

This isn't some just kind of sit down on the couch and let Him drag us around. But we cooperate, we press in in the ways that God has called us to, right?

[45:53] And it's, these aren't super complex things, but we draw near to God through His Word. We pray to Him and seek His help. So we're cooperating, we're cultivating this dependence, this awareness.

Essentially, walking by the Spirit is cultivating a relationship with Him. It's forming the habit of seeking His wisdom as we make decisions that pertain to our spiritual well-being.

It's forming the habit of opening our Bible, knowing that He is there ready to help us. So we pray, Psalm 119.18, Open my eyes that I might behold wondrous things from Your Word.

It's forming the habit of making every effort to rely upon Him for our faith. It's a lifelong endeavor. We don't ever arrive, but we strive to make it normal, to make it a habit to depend on Him.

It's like breathing, second nature. We want to be so aware and so dependent on the Spirit that it just becomes naturally who we are because we've cultivated it so much.

[47:08] we're conditioned and poised to walk by the Spirit because we need Him so much in our lives. Church, let's seek the Spirit.

Let's walk by Him because we need Him. We need Him for our salvation. Let's pray. Father, thank You for Your Word.

I recognize I've said a lot of things and none of it will bear fruit apart from Your Spirit. Spirit, would You have Your way in our hearts, in our lives.

Would You help us? We need You. Pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.